

## THE MICHAUX TREES.

(Report of Committee read before the American Philosophical Society,  
December 15, 1876.)

TO THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND TO THE FAIRMOUNT  
PARK COMMISSIONERS :

The Chairman of the Committee on the Michaux Fund of the said Society, and of the Committee on Trees and Nurseries of the latter, respectfully reports :

That he regards this year, 1876, as an era, from which will date a large advancement in the matters under the care of said Committees. Before it began very valuable importations of the rarest oaks had been made and planted in the Park Nursery, from which the first transplantations have lately been made into the Park grounds, and a few of them have been ordered into the *Campus* of the University of Pennsylvania this fall. Some planting out of the various trees in the Nursery had been made in the Park along the few avenues opened, and 1639 trees have been planted over the space occupied for the Centennial International Exhibition. The formation of the grounds within that space by the Board of Finance of the Exhibition and the planting therein are an invaluable acquisition to the Fairmount Park, as open waste fields have thereby been converted into beautiful gardens, with avenues, walks and fountains. It is true, that the garden of the Horticultural Hall was, to a large extent, planted with trees and flowers by Foreign and American exhibitors. James Veitch & Sons, of King's Road, Chelsea, S. W., near London, presented to the Park Commissioners their valuable collection of trees and plants, consisting chiefly of Rhododendrons.

The American exhibitors who had collected and planted in the garden of Horticultural Hall a rare variety of trees and ligneous plants were Thomas Meehan, of Germantown; Hoopes, Brother & Thomas, of West Chester, Pa.; S. B. Parsons & Sons, and R. B. Parson & Co., of Flushing, N. Y.; Miller & Hayes, of Mount Airy, Philadelphia; Mahlon Moon, of Morrisville, Pa.; and Robert Buist, of Philadelphia. They were actuated by a liberal desire that their collections should remain in the Park, and offered them at prices which they esteemed little over half the cost to them. It was an object to the Commissioners to secure these permanently for our Park, to be transplanted as thinning out shall be required for their healthy growth, and they have been secured by purchase.

The resources for this purchase should be here stated. They were as follows :

The city's appropriation, by the Park Commission applied for Nurseries in 1876.....	\$1,500 00
Accumulated Interest on Elliott Cresson's Legacy.....	3,000 00
“ “ André F. Michaux's Legacy.....	414 60
Contributions by the following persons of \$100 each, to wit: William L. Schaffer, George C. Thomas, Charles H. Rogers,	

Samuel Jeanes, Joseph Jeanes, Joshua T. Jeanes, Isaac F. Baker, Eli K. Price .....	\$800 00
Moses Brown and J. C. Strawbridge, each \$50.....	100 00
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Together.....	\$5,814 60

As the legacies of Elliott Cresson and André F. Michaux are enduring funds for planting in the Fairmount Park and elsewhere, it is proper here to show what are the trusts of those wills, and what are the obligations to the public incurred by the Park Commission in executing the agency committed to them.

#### ELLIOTT CRESSON'S LEGACY.

Elliott Cresson, by his last will and testament, made in 1857, provided as follows :

“I give and bequeath to the Mayor and community of Philadelphia the sum of \$5,000, in trust, as a perpetual fund, the income of which I desire shall be annually, forever, expended in planting and renewing shade trees, especially in situations now exposing my fellow citizens to the heat of the sun.”

An ordinance to provide for the investment of the principal and the application of the income of the Legacy of Elliott Cresson, Esq., to the City of Philadelphia, was passed June 10, 1859.

#### “A SUPPLEMENT

“*To ‘An Ordinance to provide for the investment of the principal and the application of the income of the Legacy of Elliott Cresson, Esq., to the City of Philadelphia,’ approved June 20, 1859.*”

“Section 1. The Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia do ordain, That the income of the fund bequeathed to the City of Philadelphia by Elliott Cresson, Esq., shall be expended in accordance with his will, by the Commissioners of the Park, constituted pursuant to the Act of Assembly, approved March 20, 1867.”

The will of André Francois Michaux, of Vawreal, near Pointoise, France, dated the 4th September, 1855.

It revokes former wills. It declares as follows :

“Wishing to recognize the services and good reception and the cordial hospitality which my father and myself, together and separately, have received during our long and often perilous travels, in all the extent of the United States ; as a mark of my lively gratitude, and also to contribute in that country to the extension and progress of agriculture, and more especially in sylviculture in the United States ; I give and bequeath to the American Philosophical Society, at Philadelphia, of which I have the honor to be a member, the sum of twelve thousand dollars (at 5.50 the dollar, 64.800 francs). I give and bequeath to the Society of Agriculture and Art, &c., in the State of Massachusetts, Boston, in which I have the honor to be a member, the sum of eight thousand dollars (at 5.10 the dollar is, 43.200) these two sums together making one hundred and eight thousand francs, or again twenty thousand dollars. I give and bequeath the sole ownership

to these two above said Societies, and the usufruct to my aforesaid wife for her life."

The American Philosophical Society, believing that they could best execute their trust as to half the income of the Michaux Legacy in the Fairmount Park, made the following arrangement for that purpose :

*"Office of the Commissioners of Fairmount Park, No. 224 South Fifth Street, Philadelphia, March 12th, 1870.*

"At a meeting of the Commissioners of the Park, held this day, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted :

*"Whereas,* The American Philosophical Society has made a communication to this commission, proposing that the name of André Francois Michaux, who traveled long in this country, and described our oaks and forest trees in a work of great merit and splendor, should have his name, and that of his father (who had, by like travel and study rendered service to science,) honored in the Fairmount Park, in a manner, to be a memorial to their devotion to science, and to promote the objects which had occupied their lives, and has proposed, after the death of the widow of André Francois Michaux, to devote the interest or income of six thousand dollars bequeathed by him to said Society, to be expended in execution of the trust of his will in the said Park, for the purpose following ; therefore,

*"Resolved,* That there shall be a grove of oaks in the Fairmount Park, forever, to bear the name of 'The Michaux Grove,' in which, if practicable, shall grow two oaks of every kind that will endure the climate.

*"Resolved,* That any surplus of revenue received by the commission from the Michaux Fund, after satisfying the requirements of the preceding resolution, shall be devoted to the cultivation of oaks of every variety capable of cultivation in our climate, in the Park nursery ; which oaks, to the extent of two of each kind cultivated, be hereafter distributed to other Public Parks in the United States, under proper regulations to be hereafter prescribed."

*Resolved,* That this Society do agree to the terms contained in the preamble and resolutions of the Fairmount Park Commissioners, adopted on the 12th day of March, 1870, in the expectation and confidence that the planting of the Michaux Grove of Oaks may soon be commenced, so that the Grove shall early become one of the attractions of the Park." Proceedings, Nov. 83, p. 312.

There appearing to be scope for a more extended benefit to be accomplished within the intention of Mr. Michaux, the powers of the Park Commission were extended by the American Philosophical Society.

At a meeting of the American Philosophical Society, November 17th, 1876, it was

*Resolved,* That this Society consents that, after providing for the Michaux Grove of Oaks, and for cultivation of other oaks in the Park Nursery, as provided by the resolutions of the Fairmount Park Commissioners, of March 12th, 1870, and agreed to by this Society on the 18th of March, 1870, the residue of the income of the Michaux Legacy paid



over to said Park Commission may be applied to the purchase of other trees ; and such other trees as well as oaks may be distributed not only to other Public Parks but to City Squares, and in exchanges with other Public Nurseries, and in planting the grounds of Institutions of Learning and Charity, to any extent that will not impair the primary purposes of said agreement of March, 1870.

In respect to the intention of Elliot Cresson's will, to wit, "in planting and renewing shade trees, especially in situations now exposing my fellow citizens to the heat of the sun," the testator is to be taken to mean the greatest good to his fellow citizens by the shade of trees, and that would be where they most frequent, consistently with the requirements of business. It would not be to place trees in the thronged streets where such plantings would be obstructive and mask all business signs ; but would properly be in all our public squares ; in streets where people are yet so few as to permit the growth of trees without unduly obstructing passengers ; certainly in the East Park, as Mr. Cresson knew it ; and with a necessary expansion as business shall extend, to drive away such planting, and to follow the growth of the city, as the citizens move outward, and the Parks as they shall become more central and thronged. Charities are to be executed as near the intention as reasonably practicable ; City and Girard heirs, 9 Wright's Repts. 9 ; and follow the growth and needs of their objects.

The Park Commission have from the Michaux legacy made importations that have given them the best collection of young and rare oaks in the country, containing about 1200 growing trees.

From the income of the Cresson legacy they have supplied two hundred dollars for trees in Independence Square, and have voted six hundred trees for the other Public Squares, from the Park Nursery ; and two hundred and fifty trees for planting round the grounds of the University of Pennsylvania, and the University Hospital. The contiguous streets opened through the Almshouse ground, and elsewhere as new streets shall be opened, or built upon, might be supplied with trees from the Park Nursery.

There are now growing in the Park Nursery nearly eighty thousand trees and shrubs, of which about thirty thousand are of a size to plant out. Of the latter, there are, of *Arbor Vitæ*: American, 5,000; Siberia, 711; Tom Thumb, do., 1,047; Globe, do., 150; Hovey, do., 350; of White Pine, 350; Australian Pine, 200; Scotch Pine, 200; Balsam Fir. 600; Junipers, 370; Norway Spruce, 2,400; White do., 850; Hemlock, 500; Golden Willow, 32; Sweet Gum, 350; Tulip Poplar, 700; Cypress, 360; Forsythea, 400; Althea Var., 200; Mahonia, 30; Althea, 5,200; Norway Maple, 500; Privet, 150; European Larch, 30; European Birch, 240; English Elm, 400; Sugar Maple, 350; American Ash, 800; American Elm, 1,000; Kentucky Coffee Tree, 100; European Oaks, 800; American Chestnut, 25; Hornbeam, 3,128; American Beech, 50; European Beech, 2,000; Turkey Oaks, 350; Mist Tree, 200; American Larch, 200; Green Poplar, 96; Silver Maple, 440.

The City Councils and other officials will be authorized to draw on the above stock of trees, to the extent of the fulfilment of the trusts under the

wills of Cresson and Michaux, through the Park Commission, and even beyond those limits no doubt the Commission would consent for the public Squares, streets and Institutions.

Within the Park the Landscape Gardener will exert his skill to blend in beauty the self-sown forests there growing, with artistic planting, as the formation of new avenues and fresh grading will demand; where the new trees will be of kinds not native to our environs, and show in contrast the hand of Art; but at the same time greatly add to the variety and novelty of the trees and plants; so that the trees of the Park shall become a great *Arboretum*, and its flower beds become Botanic Gardens. Thus the landscape formed to please the taste, and the gardens to delight the eye, will become Schools of Science for all scholars and citizens. For this end, each section of the Park will be planted with the largest practicable variety of trees and plants.

That the variety of these may be greatly increased, we have purchased the trees exhibited in Horticultural Garden, and the gathering and planting of acorns and tree seeds have had in view mainly to increase the number of species, while providing the necessary stock whence to transplant trees over our Park of nearly three thousand acres in extent.

It is with pleasure I name those who have afforded the Committee cordial aid in supplying trees, acorns and tree seeds for the Fairmount Park during this Centennial year. They are, Dr. George B. Wood; Dr. George Smith, of Delaware County; Isaac Martin; Thomas S. Chambers; Mr. Smedley; Israel Lamborn, of Chester County; Dr. Kirkbride; Aubrey H. Smith; Philip C. Garrett; Isaac F. Baker; Clarence H. Clark; Dr. Morris Longstreth; Isaac Burke; George Stockham; Burnet Landreth; Thos. L. Craig, of Philadelphia; David Marshall, of San Francisco; Rollo Nichols, of Conn.; and Samuel Davenport, of South Australia, Commissioner to the Centennial Exhibition.

Through the latter the Committee received a collection of tree seeds from Tasmania; and have been informed of others on the way from South Australia. Mr. Davenport hopes to furnish the seeds of a Mountain Eucalyptus, with antimalarial potency, that will stand our climate.

The acorns and tree seeds furnished to the Park Nursery, have been, English White Oak, European Oak, Overcup White Oak, Post Oak, Chestnut White Oak, Weeping Oak, Willow Oak, Spanish Oak Acorns, Red Oak, Scarlet Oak, Pin Oak, White Oak, Turkey Oak, Bartram Oaks.

The American Ivy, Yellow Locust, do., pseudacacia, Kentucky Coffee tree, Silver Ash, Black Ash, Horse Chestnuts; Larch, European and American; Nettle tree, Paw-paw, Magnolia, Flowering Crab Apple, Carolina and Green Buckthorn, Firethorn, Dogwood, Silver Bell, Winterberry, Blackhaw, Japan Callicarpa Cerulea, Skimmia Japonica; Celastris Scandens; Chinese Bignonia, Laburnums, Horse Chestnuts; White Birch, English Ash, Catalpa, Tulip Tree, Elm, Oriental Plane Trees.

Of Maples, Norway, Sycamore, Purple-leaved, Currant-leaved, Sugar and Rock Sugar.

Nor have we failed to think of the boys and girls of future times, and have planted and provided for the planting of the nuts of the Shellbark Hickory, large and small, English and black Walnuts, Chestnuts and Chin-copins; the Nutmeg Pine.

Many of the above varieties of acorns and tree seeds have been supplied through Samuel Davenport to four Provinces of Australia, to wit: Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland, and New South Wales; and also to Dr. Schomburgk, of Adelaide, S. A.; to the Phillipine Islands, through Mr. Sebastian Vidal, Spanish Commissioner for the preservation of the forests of those islands; to Japan, through Rev. E. R. Beadle. The supply of acorns and tree seeds has been procured without any cost to any public or trust fund.

The Park Commission have received from Mr. Jacob Hoffner, of Cincinnati, Ohio, a Sago Palm, now in Horticultural Hall, formerly owned by Robert Morris and Henry Pratt, when they owned Lemon Hill, which plant is now supposed to be about 130 years old.

It is in this Centennial year that the artistic planting of the Park has fairly begun; and with the stock of trees on hand in the nursery, with moderate additions for the sake of variety, the formation of the landscapes may steadily proceed, without any serious expenditure, towards completion, as far as such work will admit of completion; for always old trees must decay, to be replaced by those that are both young and new. To fail to meet the annual expenditure for such purpose would be to fail to realize two great purposes of acquiring the Park, namely, the health and enjoyment of the people, and the increase of the resources of taxation commensurately with the interest of the capital invested in the Park. The Park must both be kept beautiful and attractive and the purity of the water supply preserved, or we become delinquent in performing a great duty towards our City, State and Country.

Fault has been found for delay in planting trees in the Park. This complaint is partly to be answered, if not fully, by the fact that it was necessary first to purchase the lands in the Park from many owners, including building lots in six village plots, necessarily a work of time, and after the purchases the ground had to be, and is yet to be, planned, graded, and avenues opened, before it could be known where to plant trees; and the Centennial International Exhibition necessarily caused delay in planning the West Park. There has been such delay during which it is to be regretted trees have not been growing; but that regret will be lessened when we reflect that the planning and planting can now go on rapidly, and be adapted to the buildings and gardens in the exhibition grounds with now an adequate supply of trees at command, and competent skill employed for planning and landscape gardening. These advantages will probably compensate for the loss by delay; and, indeed, more than compensate for them. Let us now proceed with such earnestness that the era of our Park's great improvements shall date from our National Centennial Year.

ELI K. PRICE, *Chairman, &c.*